UNITED NATIONS **S**

Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

S/1998/736
10 August 1998

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

LETTER DATED 10 AUGUST 1998 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF ETHIOPIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I have the honour to transmit herewith a communiqué issued by the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) Ministerial Subcommittee, which met on the South-Sudan conflict, in Addis Ababa from 4 to 6 August 1998 (see annex).

I should be grateful if you could kindly circulate the present letter and its annex as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Duri MOHAMMED
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

Annex

Communiqué issued at Addis Ababa on 7 August 1998 by the Ministerial Subcommittee of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development

1. At the invitation of the Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, Ato Seyoum Mesfin, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia, the Hon. Ruhakana Rugunda, Minister, Office of the President of Uganda, Mr. Girma Asmerom, Ambassador of Eritrea to Ethiopia, representing the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the State of Eritrea, met at Addis Ababa from 4 to 6 August 1998, under the chairmanship of Dr. Bonaya Adhi Godana, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Kenya.

2. Also participating were Mr. Ahmed Issa Gabobe, Ambassador of the Republic of Djibouti to Eritrea, representing the Current Chairman of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and Dr. Kinfe Abraham, Director, Political and Humanitarian Affairs, IGAD secretariat.

3. The delegation of the Government of the Sudan was led by Dr. Mustafa Osman Ismail, Minister for Foreign Affairs, while the delegation of the Sudanese People's Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A) was led by Commander Salva Kiir Mayardit, Deputy Chairman, SPLM, and Chief of General Staff of SPLA.

4. The IGAD Subcommittee expressed its appreciation to the Government of the Sudan and SPLM/A for their declarations to observe an unlimited and three months ceasefire, respectively, to facilitate the free and unimpeded flow of humanitarian assistance to all populations affected by famine in all areas constituting the theatre of conflict between the forces of the Government of the Sudan and SPLA. To this end, the Subcommittee appreciated the expressed willingness of SPLM/A to consider extending further the ceasefire in order to facilitate effective humanitarian operations.

5. The Subcommittee appreciated the assistance provided by the international community and called upon them to take advantage of the ceasefire and to provide, in sufficient quantities, humanitarian assistance, including food and medicines, to the suffering people of the Sudan in the war-zone areas.

6. To this end, the Subcommittee welcomed the agreement between the Government of the Sudan and SPLM/A to reactivate the Technical Committee on humanitarian assistance, with membership drawn from the Government of the Sudan, SPLM/A, the United Nations/Operation Lifeline Sudan (OLS) and IGAD. The Technical Committee is mandated to review the earlier agreements and protocols with a view to ensuring the free and effective flow of humanitarian assistance to the affected people. The Subcommittee urged OLS to convene a meeting of the Technical Committee urgently and in any case within two weeks.

7. The Subcommittee noted the commitment by both parties to maintain the ceasefire, to enable relief supplies to reach all areas in need. The Subcommittee also welcomed the agreement by the parties not to divert relief

supplies and, further, not to use these supplies for military and/or political purposes.

8. On the question of State and religion, the Subcommittee regrets that the parties have been unable to reach a common ground. The Subcommittee, however, calls upon both parties to continue searching for an agreement on this issue.

9. The Subcommittee regrets that the Government of the Sudan and SPLM/A were unable to agree on the definition of South Sudan for the purpose of conducting a referendum. Whereas both parties agreed in principle that South Sudan constitutes the area so defined at independence on 1 January 1956, SPLM/A insists that the South includes Abyei, which had been transferred from Bahr El-Ghazal to Southern Kordofan in 1952 for purely administrative purposes only. The Government of the Sudan, which acknowledges the special status of Abyei, was, however, not prepared, at this stage, to include it within the boundaries of South Sudan for purposes of the referendum. On the regions of Southern Kordofan and Southern Blue Nile, SPLM/A has agreed to exclude them from the definition of South Sudan but without prejudice to the right of the peoples of the said areas to self-determination, while the Government of the Sudan made it clear that self-determination is only for South Sudan as defined at 1 January 1956.

10. On the interim arrangements, the Subcommittee acknowledged the submission of the Government of the Sudan and SPLM/A on their respective positions, which it considered a step forward, and directed the special envoys to continue consultations with the two sides with the view to bridging the existing gap.

11. The Subcommittee welcomed the continued supportive role of the Organization of African Unity, the IGAD Partners Forum and the international community to the IGAD peace process.

12. Taking into consideration the achievements obtained so far and the commitment by the parties to continue with the IGAD peace process and to keep the momentum, the Subcommittee agreed to continue with consultations until an amicable solution is reached and, to that end, further agreed to convene the fourth round of negotiations within six months, in Nairobi.

13. The Subcommittee, while appreciating the work done by the special envoys, underlined the importance of the mechanism of shuttle diplomacy as a means of narrowing the gap on outstanding issues and recommended its continuation.

14. The Subcommittee expressed its appreciation to the Government and people of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia for hosting the peace talks and for the warm welcome and hospitality accorded to the delegations.